

National Implementation

of International Humanitarian Law



B i e n n i a l R e p o r t
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With this issue of its Biennial Report, the ICRC Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) has chosen to revise the format. In place of the previous country-by-country section, the reader will find enclosed a CD-ROM that contains in particular the full text of IHL-related treaties, their status of ratification and examples of national implementation measures adopted by some States. The content of this CD-ROM is a simplified version of the ICRC databases on IHL that are available on the Internet (www.icrc.org) with keyword and text search functions.

The Advisory Service is grateful to all contributors – national authorities, members of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and others – for their invaluable assistance, without which it would have been impossible to compile the information given in this report and CD-ROM.

That information is not exhaustive. Material is continuously being updated and incorporated for States which do not yet appear in the report. Furthermore, the flags on the cover do not necessarily represent the countries included in the database on national implementation reproduced on the CD-ROM.

To start: use "index.htm" • Compatibility: hybrid Mac/PC



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The Advisory Service aims to foster a systematic and proactive response to the ICRC's efforts to enhance the implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL).

The Advisory Service's three priorities are to encourage ratification of IHL treaties, to promote national implementation of obligations arising from these treaties and to collect and facilitate the exchange of information on national measures of implementation.

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States Parties to international humanitarian law treaties have a legally binding commitment to adopt national measures of implementation – and specifically, national legislation – so as to be in a position to respect and ensure respect for this law in all circumstances. The International Committee of the Red Cross, through its Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law, is committed to helping the national authorities adopt and implement the legislative, regulatory and administrative measures required to ensure respect for the law at the national level.

It is today my pleasure to note the significant progress made in 2002 and 2003 toward the universality of international humanitarian law treaties and their national implementation and to assess that progress. The positive trends that have been documented in previous years have continued in this most recent reporting period.

The year 2002 marked the 25th anniversary of the 1977 Additional Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions for the protection of victims of war. The adoption of those instruments constituted a decisive stage in the process of strengthening the protection of individuals in armed conflicts, and several events were organized worldwide to celebrate this anniversary.

In 2003 the number of ratifications required for the entry into force of the 1999 Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict was reached, and the treaty will now come into effect. Almost 50 years after the adoption of the 1954 Hague Convention much remains to be done to ensure its universal ratification and faithful respect for it. The present report provides information on the contents of the relevant treaties for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict and on the status of national implementation worldwide.



Among the major events of recent years reference should be made to the substantial step that has been taken by creating a permanent International Criminal Court (ICC). The existence of the Court has a significant impact on the jurisdiction of States. Although the ICC Statute does not explicitly oblige member States to adjust their laws on the repression of international crimes to cover crimes included in the Statute, States, by ratifying the Statute, agree that those crimes must be prosecuted, at either a national or an international level. This implies that the laws of States may allow the crimes to be prosecuted in their own courts under their national laws. The Advisory Service has actively continued to advise countries on the national measures to be taken in this regard, on the basis of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977

Additional Protocols and other international-law-related treaties. Domestic criminal law allowing for the prosecution of war crimes is vital, since enforcement of individual responsibility is an essential mechanism for ensuring respect for the law.

A considerable amount of work has been done over the reporting period by National Committees on International Humanitarian Law worldwide. There is no denying that today international humanitarian law is often given a rough ride. A great deal of determination and tenacity is required to apply it and to ensure its application, to think about its development, to take it seriously and to make sure that it is taken seriously by others. The National Committees are a necessary and even an indispensable means of achieving this. As advisers to the governments, the National Committees can take action to foster creation of the conditions necessary for compliance with international humanitarian law, and compliance begins with preparatory work at the national level. To facilitate the tasks of National Committees, the Advisory Service has produced specific tools to help increase the effectiveness of their work and facilitate the exchange of information relating to implementation.

The importance of national implementation of international humanitarian law was reaffirmed by the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, convened in Geneva in late 2003. The Agenda for Humanitarian Action adopted by the Conference and numerous pledges by States and National Societies concerned participation in international treaties and their implementation at country level.

National implementation of international humanitarian law is an ongoing task, and the promise of better respect for international humanitarian law will not be fulfilled without sustained and increased commitment from governments. It is my hope that this report will prove to be a useful tool for all those working in the national implementation of international humanitarian law, and that it will provide an additional incentive for all concerned and increase enthusiasm for the work to be done.

Promoting universal participation in international treaties is a priority for the ICRC. A large number of the Advisory Service's activities are undertaken with the ratification of or accession to these treaties as their primary objective.

At 1 January 2004, State participation in relevant treaties stood as follows:

1949	Geneva Conventions for the Protection of War Victims	191 States Parties
	The Geneva Conventions protect wounded, sick and shipwrecked combatants, the personnel attending to them, the buildings in which they are sheltered and the equipment used for their benefit. The Conventions also protect prisoners of war, through specific rules governing their treatment, and the civilian population, in particular in occupied territories	
1977	Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions	161 States Parties
	Protocol I broadens the protection extended to civilians and limits the methods and means of warfare	
	Declaration provided for under Article 90 of Protocol I – International Fact-Finding Commission	65 States
	The Commission is a permanent body whose purpose is to investigate allegations of grave breaches and other serious violations of IHL and to facilitate, through its good offices, the restoration of an attitude of respect for the law	
1977	Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions	156 States Parties
	Protocol II contains fundamental guarantees for persons not taking part in hostilities during non-international armed conflicts and lays down rules relating to the protection of civilians, civilian objects and installations essential to the survival of the population	
1954	Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict	109 States Parties
	The Convention protects monuments of architecture, art or history and other cultural property. The First Protocol (1954) to the Convention provides that such property shall not be exported from occupied territories and that any property so exported shall be safeguarded and returned.	88 States Parties
	The Second Protocol (1999) reinforces the repression of violations and also applies to internal conflicts.	20 States Parties
1972	Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction	151 States Parties
	The Convention bans biological weapons.	
1980	Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons	93 States Parties
	This Convention establishes the framework for the Protocols prohibiting the use of non-detectable fragments (Protocol I), prohibiting the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices against the civilian population and restricting their use against military targets (Protocol II), and prohibiting the use of incendiary weapons against civilians and civilian objects and restricting their use against military targets (Protocol III).	

Protocol IV (1995), on blinding weapons, prohibits the use of laser weapons that are specifically designed to cause permanent blindness.

75 States Parties

Amended Protocol II (1996), on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices, broadens the prohibitions relating to these devices and extends the Protocol's scope of application to non-international armed conflicts.

74 States Parties

The **Amendment (2001) to the 1980 Convention** on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons expands the scope of application of the Convention and its Protocols to non-international armed conflicts.

21 States Parties

Protocol V (2003), on explosive remnants of war, requires the parties to a conflict to take measures to reduce the dangers posed by explosive ordnance that has been used or fired but has failed to explode as intended (unexploded ordnance) and by stocks of explosive ordnance left behind on the battlefield (abandoned ordnance).

1993 **Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction**

158 States Parties

The Convention bans chemical weapons.

1997 **Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction**

141 States Parties

The Convention bans anti-personnel landmines.

1998 **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court**

92 States Parties

The Statute establishes a permanent international criminal court with jurisdiction over the crime of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Court will also have jurisdiction over the crime of aggression, once defined.

2000 **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts**

67 States Parties

The Protocol raises the age limit for participation in hostilities to 18 years old.

Although the initial ratification of international treaties is essential, it is merely the first step. The treaties themselves contain obligations that States Parties must comply with upon ratification or accession. Obligations under the principal treaties include the adoption of legislative and other implementation measures.

Legislation

Repression of breaches of IHL

IHL sets out detailed rules aimed at protecting the victims of armed conflict and restricting the methods and means of warfare. It also establishes mechanisms to ensure that these rules are respected. In particular, IHL holds individuals responsible for violations of its rules that they commit or order others to commit. It requires that those responsible for serious violations be prosecuted and punished as criminals. Serious violations of the law are regarded as war crimes. IHL requires States to search for and punish all those who commit grave breaches, regardless of the nationality of the perpetrator or the place where the crime was committed. This principle, called universal jurisdictions, is a key factor in ensuring the effective repression of war crimes.

States must therefore ensure that their criminal law provides for punishment of:

- grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I;
- violations of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property;
- wilful killing of or serious injury to civilians resulting from violations of amended Protocol II (on landmines) of the 1980 Conventional Weapons Convention;
- activities prohibited under the 1993 Convention on Chemical Weapons and the 1997 Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Mines;
- crimes that come within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

Protection of the emblems

States must prevent and repress (punish) misuse of the emblems and names of the red cross and red crescent (or the use of imitations thereof), the civil defence sign and the electronic signals mentioned in IHL instruments. Their internal measures must also provide for the definition and identification of recognized and protected emblems and the appointment of a national authority to supervise matters relating to the emblems, such as who is entitled to use them and for what purposes.

Other implementation measures

States party to IHL treaties are also required to take a variety of administrative measures.

Translation of the treaties into the national language

The Advisory Service is often involved in producing translations, which are then officially endorsed and published by the authorities and made available to those concerned. They are placed at the disposal of all States Parties via the depositary.

Dissemination and training

Combatants must receive instruction in IHL, so that they can take account of its rules in their behaviour. If IHL is to receive due respect, it must become familiar to all concerned. Civil servants, government officials, students and teachers, medical personnel and members of the media, in particular, should learn its principles.

Experts and advisers

Authorities should select and train qualified personnel in IHL and appoint legal advisers to assist military commanders in applying the law and providing appropriate instruction for the armed forces.

Identification

Cultural property, civil defence works and installations containing dangerous forces should be identified by the special signs provided for under international humanitarian law. Medical and religious personnel, journalists and staff assigned to specific tasks should be given identity cards protecting the bearers.

Military planning

Military objectives should not be located within or near densely populated areas, and new weapons and methods of warfare should comply with the rules of humanitarian law.

In 1954 the international community adopted the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. A Protocol dealing with cultural property during occupation was adopted at the same time as the 1954 Convention. The Convention's protection was enhanced by the adoption of a second Protocol in 1999.

Cultural property

Cultural property is any movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of all people, such as monuments of architecture or history, archaeological sites, works of art, books or any building whose main and effective purpose is to contain cultural property.

Categories of protection and basic obligations

All cultural property must be afforded at least a minimum of general protection. Respect for cultural property means not using cultural property for any purpose likely to expose it to destruction or damage in the event of armed conflict and refraining from any act of hostility against such property. The obligation to respect cultural property may be waived only in exceptional cases of "imperative military necessity"; all necessary precautions must be taken to avoid endangering it. A system of special protection was established under the 1954 Convention, but did not apply in practice. The 1999 Protocol consequently provides for a system of enhanced protection, subject to specific criteria. For cultural property to be placed under enhanced protection, it must be cultural heritage of the greatest importance for humanity; it must be protected by domestic measures recognizing its cultural and historical value and ensuring the highest level of protection; it must not be used for military purposes; and confirmation must be given that it will not be so used.

Criminal responsibility and jurisdiction

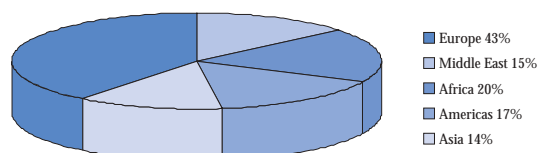
States must take all necessary steps to prosecute and impose sanctions on all persons who violate the rules protecting cultural property. Furthermore, States party to the 1999 Second Protocol are required to enact legislation ensuring that making cultural property under enhanced protection the object of attack and using it or its immediate surroundings in support of military action, as well as the extensive destruction or appropriation of protected cultural property, attacks on it, theft, pillage or misappropriation of it or acts of vandalism directed against it, are criminal offences under their domestic law.

Each State Party must also take legislative measures to establish its jurisdiction over such offences when committed in its territory, when the alleged offender is a national of that State and, in some specific cases, when the offence is committed abroad by a non-national.

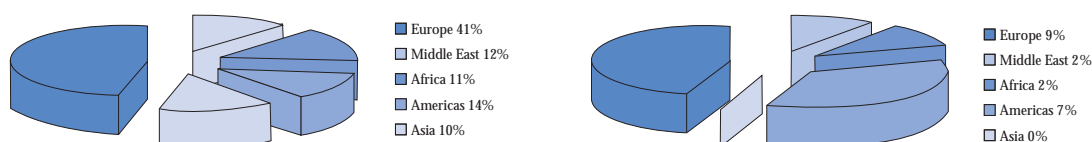
Ratification of the treaties

The number of States party to the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols reflects the importance attached by the international community to the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict.

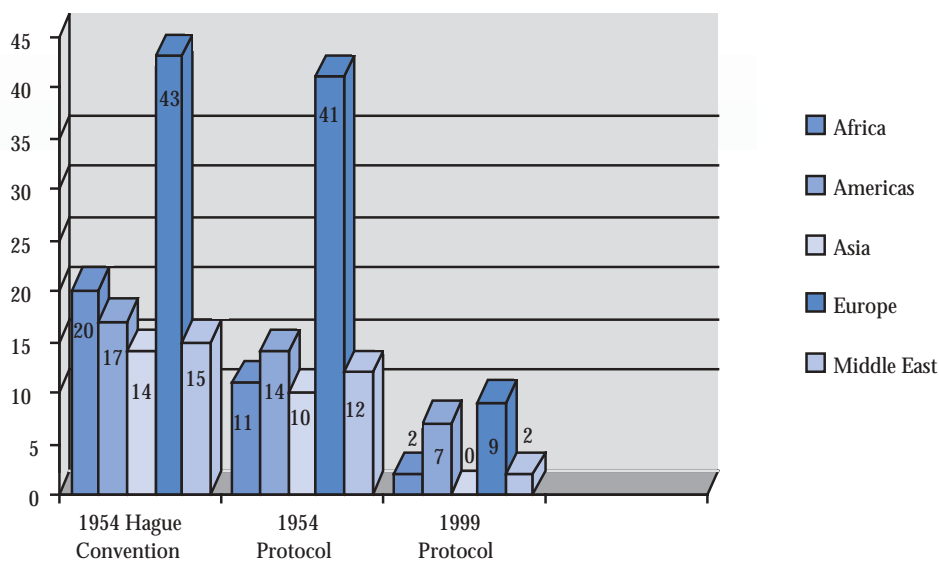
At 1 January 2004, 109 States throughout the world were party to the Convention:



Of these States, 88 were also party to the 1954 Protocol and 20 to the 1999 Protocol, as follows:



or:



Declarations and resolutions

As a matter of policy and in view of experiences in recent armed conflicts, which showed the need to better protect cultural property, organizations have now taken a more systematic approach towards promoting the ratification and implementation of the relevant treaties for its protection.

One example is the recent Declaration concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference convened in Paris in October 2003, which calls upon States to take all appropriate measures to prevent, avoid, stop and suppress acts of intentional destruction of cultural heritage, wherever such heritage is located. To that end States are requested to take all legislative, administrative, educational and technical measures that may be needed. The Declaration includes a call to all States that have not yet done so, to become party to the 1954 Hague Convention and its two Protocols, and to Additional Protocols I and II of 1977 to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

Another example is Resolution 11 of the 2001 session of the Council of Delegates, the first resolution adopted by the Council to give Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations a specific formal basis for their work to protect cultural property in the event of armed conflict. The operative part of this resolution requests the ICRC, in cooperation with UNESCO, to continue to encourage ratification and implementation of the 1954 Hague Convention and its two Protocols; encourages the National Red Cross and Red Crescent to include those instruments in their activities to promote, disseminate and implement IHL, and invites States to become party to them and to the other relevant treaties. Much has been done to give effect to this resolution. A follow-up report summarizing information provided by the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on activities undertaken pursuant to this resolution was presented by the British Red Cross to the Council of Delegates that met in Geneva in late 2003.

Furthermore, at the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Geneva, 2003), States and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies pledged that they would take the 50th anniversary of the 1954 Hague Convention as an opportunity to further promote the protection of cultural property and to make progress in the areas requiring improvement.

National implementation of the Convention

National measures that may need to be taken under the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property and its Protocols and other relevant IHL treaties include, in particular, the following:

Identification and inventories

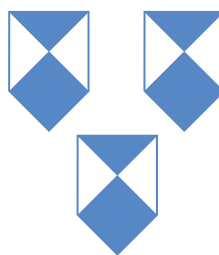
Cultural property should be identified and listed. Inventories should be prepared and placed at the disposal of the bodies concerned by the protection of cultural property, i.e. the civilian and military authorities, specialized organizations and/or other interested institutions.

Identification

Cultural property may (general protection) or must (special protection) be marked by an emblem. The distinctive emblems denoting cultural property are as follows:



General Protection



Special Protection

Persons responsible for protecting cultural property carry a special identity card bearing the distinctive emblem.

Penal repression

States party to the 1954 Convention must take all necessary steps to prosecute and impose sanctions on all persons who violate the Convention. Furthermore, States party to the 1999 Protocol must ensure that specific violations as defined by its rules are criminal offences under domestic law.

Implementing legislation

At 1 January 2004 the Advisory Service had been able to collect information on relevant legislation for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict from very few States, namely Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Cuba, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania and Venezuela, in addition to provisions adopted by some States within the framework of their criminal legislation.

How to accede to the relevant treaties

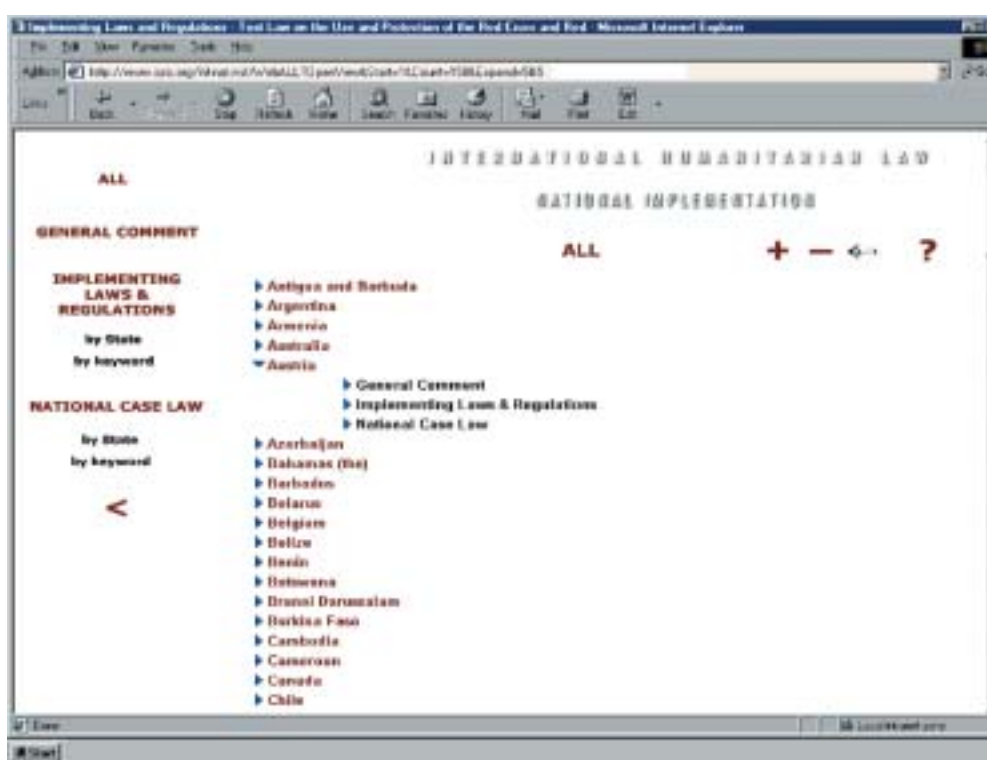
The Director-General of UNESCO is the depositary of the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols. In order to become party to the Protocols, a State must first be party to the Convention. The instruments of ratification, acceptance, accession or succession must be sent to the following address:

Director-General of UNESCO
7, place Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
France

The 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols are managed by UNESCO's Division of Cultural Heritage, International Standards Section. The following address can be consulted for further information: **<http://www.unesco.org/culture/legalprotection>**

One of the Advisory Service's main aims is to encourage the exchange of information on legislative, administrative and other measures adopted by States to implement IHL. A special database has been set up for that purpose in addition to the ICRC's general IHL database. Regularly updated, it contains laws, regulations and other documents pertaining to national implementation, relevant decisions of national courts and a general commentary on the legal system of each country. The commentary also includes information on national bodies responsible for implementing IHL, and bibliographical references.

www.icrc.org/ihl-nat



Each legislative document – whether an excerpt or the full text – is preceded by an introduction giving its sources, the date of its adoption and entry into force, and mentions of amendments to the initial text. The introduction provides a brief summary of the document, outlining the provisions most relevant to IHL.

Case law is also accompanied by a short summary, again focusing on IHL aspects. Decisions are usually given in full. In other instances (long texts, irrelevant passages, untranslated documents, etc.) excerpts or more substantial summaries are given.

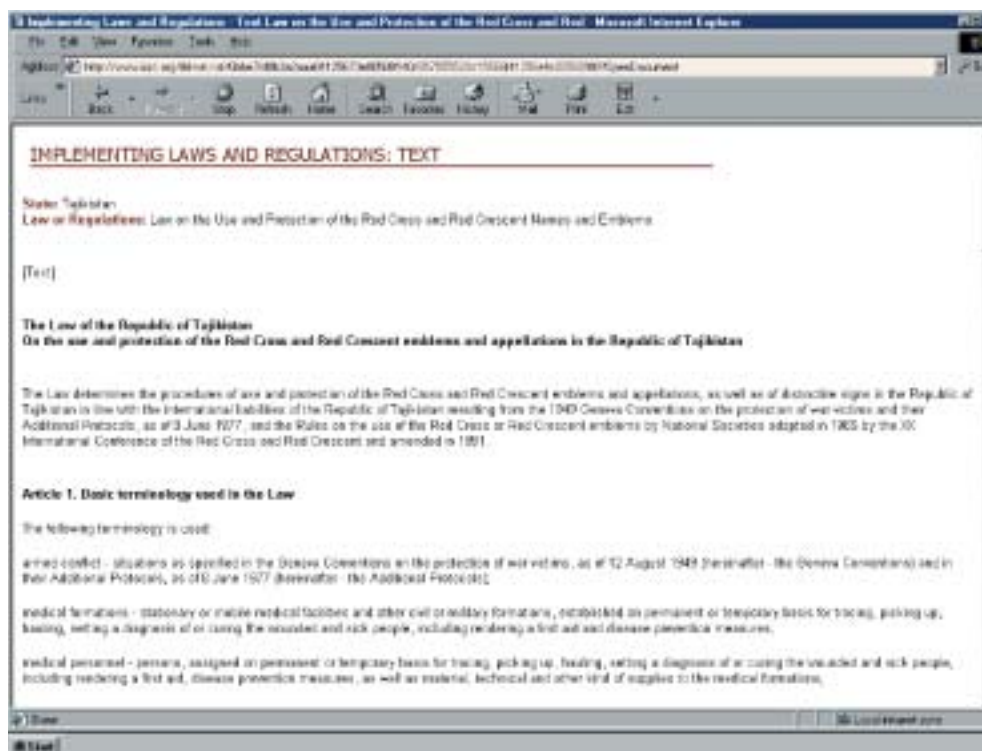
Documents are presented in the original language where this is English, French or Spanish. As a general rule, an English translation is given for all other languages. Links are provided to other relevant documents included in the database or to IHL treaty provisions in the ICRC's general IHL database.

There is a short index of 27 keywords to facilitate research, as well as a text search function.

Keywords

Biological weapons	Extradition	Missing
Chemical weapons	Extra-territorial jurisdiction	National Committee
Civil defence	Genocide	National Society
Command responsibility	Grave breach	Non-international armed conflict
Compensation	International Criminal Court	Prisoner of war
Crime against humanity	International tribunals	Protected person
Cultural property	Judicial guarantees	Statutory limitations
Dissemination	Landmines	Superior order
Emblem	Method and means of combat	War crime

Example of implementing legislation



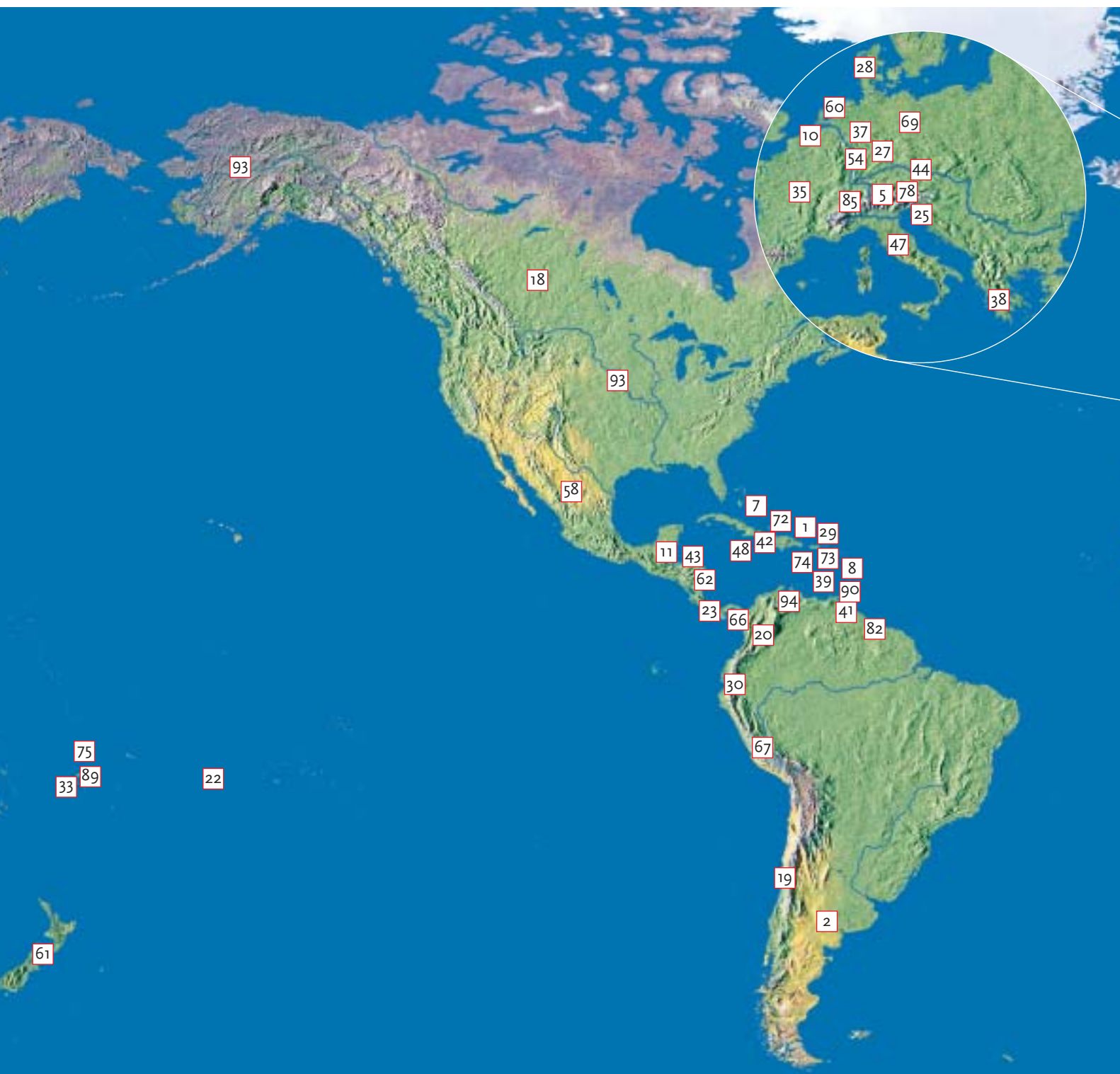
A simplified version of this database is reproduced on the CD-ROM included with this report. The full version is accessible on the ICRC's website (www.icrc.org/ihl-nat), where the information it contains is regularly updated and supplemented. It may also be freely consulted at ICRC headquarters in Geneva.

The number of States included in the database has increased steadily over time. Special care is taken to include States from all regions of the world and with different legal systems. At the end of 2003, the database contained entries relating to 98 countries.

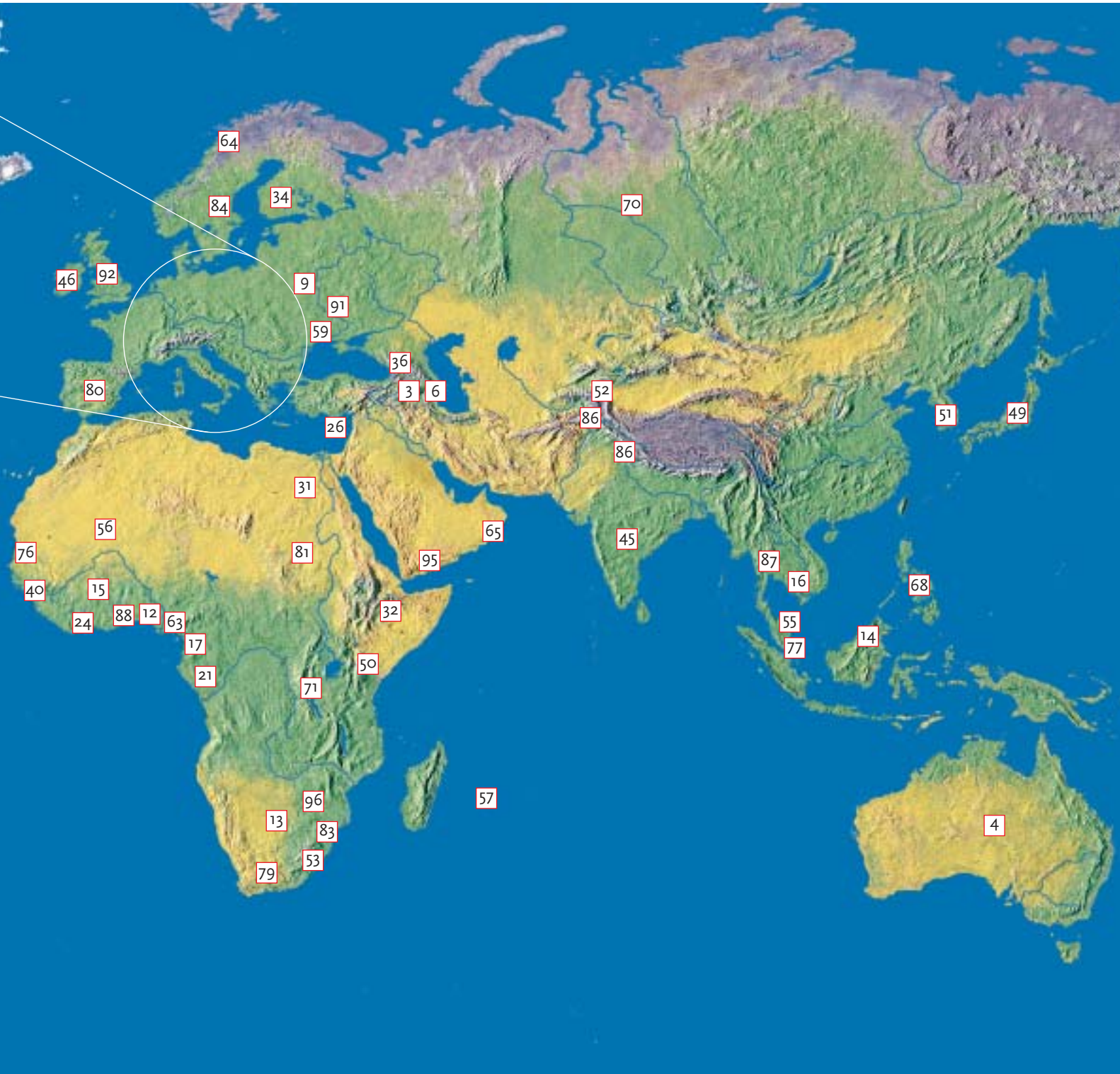
The content is drawn from information available to the ICRC Advisory Service on IHL. It illustrates possible approaches to incorporating IHL in national legislation but does not seek to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation. Any comments on the database are welcome and should be sent to the Advisory Service on IHL at the address given on the cover page.

List of countries contained in the database on national measures to implement **international humanitarian law**

Antigua and Barbuda	1	Belize	11	Congo (Rep. of the)	21	Egypt	31	Guyana	41
Argentina	2	Benin	12	Cook Islands	22	Ethiopia	32	Haiti	42
Armenia	3	Botswana	13	Costa Rica	23	Fiji	33	Honduras	43
Australia	4	Brunei Darussalam	14	Côte d'Ivoire	24	Finland	34	Hungary	44
Austria	5	Burkina Faso	15	Croatia	25	France	35	India	45
Azerbaijan	6	Cambodia	16	Cyprus	26	Georgia	36	Ireland	46
Bahamas	7	Cameroon	17	Czech Republic	27	Germany	37	Italy	47
Barbados	8	Canada	18	Denmark	28	Greece	38	Jamaica	48
Belarus	9	Chile	19	Dominica	29	Grenada	39	Japan	49
Belgium	10	Colombia	20	Ecuador	30	Guinea	40	Kenya	50



Korea (Rep. of)	51	New Zealand	61	Rwanda	71	Sudan	81	Ukraine	91
Kyrgyzstan	52	Nicaragua	62	Saint Kitts and Nevis	72	Suriname	82	United Kingdom	92
Lesotho	53	Nigeria	63	Saint Lucia	73	Swaziland	83	United States of America	93
Luxembourg	54	Norway	64	St-Vincent/Grenadines	74	Sweden	84	Venezuela	94
Malaysia	55	Oman	65	Samoa	75	Switzerland	85	Yemen	95
Mali	56	Panama	66	Senegal	76	Tajikistan	86	Zimbabwe	96
Mauritius	57	Peru	67	Singapore	77	Thailand	87		
Mexico	58	Philippines	68	Slovenia	78	Togo	88		
Moldova (Rep. of)	59	Poland	69	South Africa	79	Tonga	89		
Netherlands	60	Russian Federation	70	Spain	80	Trinidad and Tobago	90		



In order to generate momentum towards the ratification and implementation of IHL treaties, the ICRC continued, in 2002 and 2003, to organize or participate in the organization of regional events. By attending such conferences or seminars, national authorities can become more familiar with specific IHL-related topics, exchange views and compare their respective approaches to national implementation. States are also encouraged and assisted in giving the best possible follow-up to the conclusions reached or recommendations made during these meetings. Some of the main regional events that took place in 2002 and 2003 are listed below.

The third **Annual Seminar on Ratification and Implementation of International Humanitarian Law**, held in Pretoria, South Africa, on 2-6 June 2003, was organized in cooperation with the South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was attended by government representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice and/or Defence of thirteen of the fourteen Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) States, as well as Kenya and Madagascar, and by parliamentarians from Angola and South Africa. Besides global considerations, the seminar also focused on the ratification and implementation of international humanitarian law instruments within the region, in order to spur regional progress towards full implementation of these treaties. It was an opportunity to develop closer links with and between government ministries and existing national bodies on IHL and to promote the creation of such bodies in other countries. It also enabled working methods and strategies for implementation in the SADC States to be discussed and exchanged. At the end of the seminar, the participants considered the main conclusions reached and adopted a strong set of recommendations, which included a call for the continuation of a political will to respect and ensure respect for IHL, the ratification of all outstanding IHL treaties, recognition of the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission, the creation of IHL National Committees in countries which do not yet have them, and the adoption of all legislative, administrative and regulatory measures needed for full implementation of IHL. With regard to anti-personnel mines, the participants recommended that all measures be taken to fulfil the various States' obligations under the Ottawa Treaty and to fully prepare for the 2004 Review Conference, to be held in Nairobi, Kenya. It was also recommended that a copy of the recommendations be passed on to the SADC and African Union secretariats.

A regional **Seminar on the Ratification and Implementation of the Statute of the International Criminal Court** was held on 29-31 January 2002 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire). The seminar was jointly organized by the ICRC and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with the co-sponsorship of Canada and the International Technical Assistance Programme (ICCTAP), and brought together representatives of the fifteen ECOWAS member States. The participants shared their experience in terms of ratification and implementation of the ICC Statute and adopted conclusions calling on member States of ECOWAS that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to it; on member States of ECOWAS that are party to it to adopt the national implementing measures required, inter alia to allow for full cooperation with the Court; and on States party to the Statute to adopt legislation allowing for prosecution and punishment, on the basis of universal jurisdiction, of the international crimes defined in the Statute and all other serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

A meeting of all the **inter-ministerial National Committees on IHL in the Eastern and Southern African region**, attended by the chairperson and one other member of the committees of Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius and Namibia and by members from Malawi, Seychelles and Zimbabwe, was held in Nyeri, Kenya, on 10-11 June 2003. It was the first such event to be held in the region and gave members of the different committees an opportunity to meet and share their experience and to discuss issues relating to their activities, implementation, dissemination, interaction between committees and reporting. At the end of the meeting the participants adopted a set of recommendations which will help the committees to work more efficiently and increase their links with parliament and the executive authorities.

A **Regional Conference on the Ratification and Domestic Implementation of the Statute of the International Criminal Court** took place in Mexico City on 7-8 March 2002. The ICRC's Advisory Service participated in this conference, which was organized by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "No Peace Without Justice" and the presidency of the European Union (Spain) as part of a drive to familiarize Mexican lawmakers with the Rome Statute and its national implementation.

The **Regional Expert Meeting on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict**, which was held in Lima on 13-14 May 2002, was co-organized by the ICRC's Advisory Service and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It focused on the adoption of national measures implementing the treaties applicable in that area, and was attended by experts and government officials from the majority of Latin American States as well as from Europe. A report on this meeting was prepared and distributed to all participants and relevant authorities.

A **Meeting of Legislative Draftsmen** from five Caribbean Community (CARICOM) States was held on 17-19 July 2002. Discussions were centred on the drafting of legislation contained in the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols and on the 1997 Ottawa Treaty on Anti-personnel Mines.

The ICRC, together with the government of Peru, organized a **Regional Conference on Missing Persons in relation to armed conflict or situations of internal violence** in Lima on 28-30 May 2003. It was attended by representatives from 19 Latin American and Caribbean States and by experts from various organizations working in this domain. A number of recommendations calling for action to resolve the problem of missing persons in the region, and relating in particular to measures for the national implementation of IHL, were adopted.

The ICRC took part in **the Americas Regional Mine Action Seminar "Towards a Hemisphere Free of Anti-personnel Landmines"** organized by the Canadian Mine Action Team, the Organization of American States (OAS) Mine Action Team and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru in Lima on 14-15 August 2003. The Advisory Service placed particular stress on the adoption of national measures giving effect to the prohibition of anti-personnel landmines.

A region-wide **Meeting of IHL National Commissions in the Americas** was convened by the OAS and the ICRC, supported by the governments of Canada and Guatemala, from 30 July to 1 August 2003 in La Antigua, Guatemala. A number of conclusions were reached, aimed at strengthening the Committees' contributions to the IHL implementation process in their respective States.

A **Seminar on Military Justice in the Ibero-American Region** was organized by the ICRC and the Centre for International Humanitarian Law Studies of the Spanish Red Cross Society, together with the Spanish Ministry of Defence and the Madrid Bar Association. It took place in Madrid on 6-8 October 2003, and examined in particular the compatibility of military criminal law with obligations stemming from international humanitarian law treaties.

On 9 and 10 June 2003, a **Regional Expert Meeting** was held on means and mechanisms, at the international and national level, of ensuring respect for international humanitarian law. Attended by high-ranking officials and experts from 22 countries of the Asian and Pacific region, the meeting included detailed discussions on the obligations of States under international humanitarian law to adopt national measures of implementation and on the role and mandate of the National IHL Committees.

The ICRC also took active part in the **Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction**, held in Bangkok on 15-19 September 2003. The fifth Assembly of States Parties had set out three main objectives: to assess progress achieved in the past year to meet the humanitarian aims of the Convention, in particular the destruction of stocks of anti-personnel mines, mine clearance, assistance to victims and universal acceptance of the Convention; to define future courses of action in order to meet the objectives of the Convention; and lastly to prepare for the first Review Conference scheduled to take place in Nairobi from 29 November to 3 December 2004. The ICRC tabled five proposals, including one specifically concerned with the obligations of States Parties to adopt national implementation measures under the Convention, in particular measures to prevent and suppress violations.

ICRC representatives attended the **Pacific Islands Legal Officers Meeting (PILOM)**, which was held in Samoa in 2002 and was hosted in 2003 by the government of Nauru. It is a meeting of all Pacific Attorney-Generals and Solicitor Generals to discuss legal matters of regional relevance. At both events the ICRC was present as one of a limited number of observers and gave forty-minute briefings on the importance of ratifying IHL instruments and the need to create domestic implementing legislation. Over the three days of the meeting the Attorney-Generals had the opportunity to discuss specific IHL issues relevant to their country with the ICRC Legal Adviser in an informal environment.

In 2002 the ICRC visited Papua New Guinea and Fiji, hosting **seminars on the Additional Protocols** to explain the value and importance of ratifying these treaties. A similar visit by the ICRC to Tonga, where it hosted a round table on the Additional Protocols, resulted in their ratification. In 2003 the ICRC hosted a number of small events in the Marshall Islands to urge ratification of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols, and frequent communication on this subject has been established with Nauru.

The first **Academic and Practical Workshop on Implementation and Dissemination of International Humanitarian Law in Central Asia** took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 29 October to 2 November 2003. It was aimed at developing local capabilities for the dissemination and implementation of IHL in order to build up a "critical mass" of local IHL experts in each Central Asian country. It had three objectives: to update interlocutors on topical IHL issues by underscoring the relevance of IHL in addressing new types of conflict; to promote adoption of implementation measures; and to develop IHL training capabilities. Over 70 participants, including representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice, parliamentarians, academics and journalists of the five Central Asian countries, took part in presentations, round tables and debates. The workshop's results and conclusions, as well as commitments made by all parties involved in the implementation and dissemination of IHL, were consolidated in the Appeal signed by each of the participants acting in their personal capacity. The Appeal encourages, *inter alia*, the competent legislative and executive authorities of the republics of Central Asia, with the support of the IHL National Committees, to implement international humanitarian law and to consider joining the international humanitarian law treaties to which they are not yet party.

A **Regional Meeting of IHL National Committees** was organized on 6-7 March 2003 in Ljubljana, in cooperation with the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Slovenian Interdepartmental Commission for International Humanitarian Law. Representatives of six National Committees of the Central European region took part in the meeting, the objective of which was to assess the need to establish an information exchange system, to inform participants of the newest developments in IHL and to facilitate direct contacts and exchanges of information between members of the Committees.

On 5-6 November 2002 the Advisory Service held a **Regional Conference on Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War** in Moscow, in the Russian Federation. The conference brought together representatives of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and international experts from Great Britain, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and UNICEF. Its purpose was to allow for an exchange of knowledge and views concerning implementation of the Ottawa Convention and the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in the Russian Federation and other CIS States, and the challenges involved.

International courses on implementation of humanitarian law were held for CIS civil servants and scholars in Moscow on 24-27 September 2002 and 16-19 September 2003. They were designed to familiarize the participants with current IHL issues and provide an opportunity for state officials and lecturers at law and journalism faculties in the CIS countries to exchange views and experience. The courses were divided into different modules and focused on several specific subjects, such as the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, the Ottawa Convention and the Rome Statute. The speakers were experts from the CIS States and from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), UNESCO, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Max-Planck University, the Slovenian Ministry of Culture and the Austrian Society for the Protection of Cultural Property.

On 19-20 July 2003 **the first Euro-Asian Meeting of National Committees on IHL Implementation**, organized by the Belarus IHL National Committee in cooperation with the ICRC, was held in Minsk, Belarus. Representatives of the National Committees of Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine, experts from the Slovenian, Belgian and Lithuanian National Committees and representatives from UNESCO took part. Representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation were also invited to participate as observers. There were three main topics on the agenda: protection of cultural property, the Ottawa Convention, and repression of war crimes. The meeting also enabled the National Committees to discuss their respective roles and mandates, as well as ways and means of increasing their efficiency and strengthening their position vis-à-vis the national authorities. It was deemed a success by the participants and demonstrated the importance of fostering contacts between national committees on a regional and sub-regional level.

The **Second Regional Meeting of Arab States' Experts on the National Implementation of IHL** took place on 28-30 October 2002. It was organized by the Egyptian Ministry of Justice, the League of Arab States and the ICRC and was attended by government experts from 16 Arab States: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. A Palestinian delegation was also present. The delegations were composed of high-level representatives, directors of departments at the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Interior and Defence. For the first time the Gulf Cooperation Council was invited to take part, in order to incite it to include promotion and implementation of IHL on its agenda. A GCC legal adviser attended the meeting and took up contacts with the League of Arab States and the ICRC to promote work on this particular issue in the Gulf States. Items discussed during the meeting included questions related to the national implementation of IHL treaties, the work and functioning of IHL National Committees, legislative amendments, and training in IHL and its integration within the armed forces. A new Plan of Action was adopted for the year 2003 and a fact-sheet was compiled for each State to assist in drawing up national priorities.

With the support of the Egyptian Ministry of Justice and the Council of Arab Ministries of Justice, which is a body of the Arab League, the ICRC organized the **First Regional Seminar for Arab Judges**, a meeting especially for them on international humanitarian and human rights law. It took place in Cairo on 4-9 January 2003 and was attended by 35 judges from 13 Arab States. Among the main topics addressed during the meeting were the following: the principles of IHL, IHL and human rights, IHL and Islam, international and non-international armed conflicts, protected persons and objects, methods and means of warfare and the conduct of hostilities, mechanisms for respect for IHL, international criminal justice, the role of judges in the application of IHL, the national implementation of IHL, and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the role of the ICRC during situations of armed conflict.

The first **Regional Seminar for Legal Advisers of IHL National Committees of Arab States** took place in Rabat, Morocco, on 13-17 October 2003. It was organized by the Ministry of Human Rights, the Arab League and the ICRC and was attended by representatives of the five regional IHL National Committees, as well as by representatives of seven other States interested in the creation of such bodies, namely Algeria, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Syria, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates. The aim of the seminar was to promote the adoption of national measures for the implementation of IHL and the ratification of treaties to which States are not yet party.

Depending on their respective scope of activity and mandate, the ICRC cooperates with other organizations in order to develop the best possible synergies, sensitize their member States to IHL issues and act in coordination to achieve shared goals of ratification and national implementation. As shown below, cooperation takes place with organizations of a diverse nature and scope all over the world.

In 2002 the ICRC's Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law transmitted the requested information to the Secretary-General of the **United Nations** for inclusion in his report to the General Assembly pursuant to Resolution 55/148 of 12 December 2000 entitled "Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts". The information compiled in the Secretary-General's report concerns measures taken by States and the ICRC to strengthen the existing body of international humanitarian law, *inter alia* for its dissemination and full implementation at the national level.

Cooperation with the **Organization of American States (OAS)**, based on an agreement of 10 May 1996 and complemented by a Memorandum of Understanding of 3 April 2003, was further intensified with Special Sessions on the Promotion of and Respect for International Humanitarian Law convened by the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs in Washington D.C. on 6 March 2002 and 20 March 2003. On both occasions the 32 member States of the OAS exchanged views among themselves and with the ICRC on current issues of international humanitarian law, in particular the adoption of national measures of implementation. The topics examined subsequently influenced the content of two strong OAS General Assembly resolutions on the promotion of and respect for international humanitarian law (AG/RES. 1904 (XXXII-0-02) of 4 June 2002 and AG/RES (XXXIII-0-03) of 10 June 2003). Cooperation with the OAS also proved fruitful with regard to the debate on hemispheric security and the consideration given by the organization to the ICRC's concerns in that connection. The ICRC was invited to present its position to the member States at OAS headquarters in Washington D.C. on 4 March 2003, and took part in the Special Conference on Hemispheric Security held in Mexico City on 27-28 October 2003.

On the basis of an agreement of 18 August 2000, the ICRC pursued cooperation with the **Inter-American Court of Human Rights** throughout the reporting period. Formal working sessions organized at the seat of the Court in San Jose, Costa Rica, on 29 November 2002 and 5 December 2003 allowed judges and other legal personnel of the Court and ICRC delegates to analyse current challenges to the protection of persons from the perspective of international humanitarian and human rights law.

The ICRC continued to take an active part in the annual interdisciplinary course on human rights organized by the **Inter-American Institute of Human Rights** in San Jose, Costa Rica. During the 20th and 21st such courses in 2002 and 2003 the ICRC, holder of the Jean Pictet Chair, lectured on developments in international humanitarian law and organized a practical workshop to consolidate the students' understanding of the issues addressed.

Relations between the ICRC and the **Central American Educational and Cultural Coordinating Group (CECC)** intensified in 2002. During the XXIst Regular Meeting of the CECC, held in Guatemala City on 5-6 April 2002, the Ministries of Education and Culture of Central America assembled there adopted Resolution CECC/RM(OR)/GUA-2002/RES/002, addressing the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict.

Activities with the Southern Common Market (**MERCOSUR**) yielded concrete results, more particularly in the form of a resolution, MERCOSUR/CPC/REC.10/2003, adopted by the organization's Parliamentary Commission on 17 June 2003 and calling for the process of national implementation of international humanitarian law to be stepped up.

Under the auspices of the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**, Parliamentarians for Global Action and the Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law of the Republic of Argentina, the ICRC and the Argentine parliament organized a seminar for parliamentarians on 7 October 2002 to reinforce the process of national implementation of international humanitarian law in Argentina. The Acts of the seminar were published in May 2003.

Cooperation with the Costa Rica-based **United Nations University for Peace**, established by the General Assembly in 1980 (Resolution 35/55), was intensified with a course developed by the Advisory Service and offered in March 2003 as part of the university's postgraduate programme on international and human rights law.

During the first semester of 2003 the Advisory Service collaborated with the **Asociación de Universidades Confiadas a la Compañía de Jesús de América latina (AUSJAL)** in developing a virtual reality course on international humanitarian law. The course is being offered through five major universities in Colombia (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá), Guatemala (Universidad Rafael Landívar), Mexico (Universidad Iberoamericana), Uruguay (Universidad Católica del Uruguay Dámaso A. Larrañaga) and Venezuela (Universidad Católica Andrés Bello).

Within the framework of the cooperation agreement between the ICRC and the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**, a regional Seminar on the Ratification and Implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was held on 29-31 January 2002 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire).

Cooperation with the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)** was increased in 2002-2003. The ICRC attended the 32nd, 33rd and 34th sessions of the Commission, held in 2002 and 2003 in Banjul (The Gambia) and Niamey (Niger), as an observer and delivered statements on the protection of refugees under international humanitarian law. Cooperation has also been stepped up in the form of a joint publication, *International Humanitarian Law*, written at the initiative of the ICRC Mission to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the ICRC Advisory Service. The ICRC also participated in the NGO Forum traditionally organized by the Banjul (Gambia)-based **African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies**, which precedes the ordinary sessions of the ACHPR. On these occasions, the ICRC chaired workshops on the implementation of international humanitarian law and on the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The relationship between the **African Parliamentary Union (APU)** and the ICRC was deepened with the First African Parliamentary Conference on International Humanitarian Law for the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, held on 18-20 February 2002 in Niamey (Niger). It was organized by the APU with the support of the ICRC and the Inter-Parliamentary Union and attended by parliamentary delegations from 21 African States. During the Conference an exchange of views took place on the protection of vulnerable sections of the population in situations of armed conflicts and the role of parliamentarians in that regard. Relations with the APU were steadily maintained in 2002-2003 through bilateral contacts and the ICRC's attendance at the APU annual conferences, in particular with a view to establishing a Follow-up Committee to promote international humanitarian law and to see to the implementation of the Niamey Declaration. At the national level the ICRC urged national assemblies, notably in Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone, to implement the Declaration.

Cooperation and dialogue between the ICRC and its Advisory Service and the **Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)** was further developed during AALCO's annual conference in Seoul in June 2003 by holding a special full-day session devoted to international humanitarian law and various aspects of its enforcement and national implementation. A resolution on international humanitarian law, calling for enhanced compliance by member States, was adopted on that occasion.

In September 2002 the ICRC visited the parliament of Sri Lanka to hold a discussion on the relevance of international humanitarian law with a group of parliamentarians associated with the [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#). The ICRC and the IPU work in close collaboration to promote the ratification and implementation of international humanitarian law treaties. As a result of this meeting a half-day seminar on humanitarian law for parliamentarians was conducted by the ICRC for the first time in Sri Lanka, under the auspices of the Foreign Relations and Protocol Office of the Parliament.

Under the cooperation agreement with the [League of Arab States](#), several events were organized in 2002 and 2003 to sensitize authorities of Arab States to the need to ratify international humanitarian law treaties and to work towards their national implementation.

In September 2003 the ICRC met with the regional delegations of the [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#) in India and Nepal to discuss mutual strategies for 2004 in that region to promote ratification of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Discussions with UNESCO were also further developed at headquarters level so as to coordinate events to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1954 Hague Convention.

Relations and exchanges of views with the [Council of Europe](#) continued in 2002-2003 within the framework of the Council's programme of inter-governmental legal cooperation and work in support of the International Criminal Court. The Advisory Service took part as an observer in the 3rd consultation meeting (Strasbourg, September 2003) on the implications of ratification of the ICC's Rome Statute for the Council's member States. The meeting focused on specific aspects of prosecution, at the national level, of the crimes defined in the Rome Statute and the status of implementation by member States of the principle of universal jurisdiction. The Council of Europe was invited to send representatives and contribute to various events organized by the Advisory Service for countries of Central and Eastern Europe on the ICC and the repression of war crimes, such as the Regional Conference on the Implementation of the Rome Statute of the ICC held in Budapest in June 2002.

In the course of implementation of the [European Union's](#) Common Position on the ICC, the ICRC's Advisory Service was invited in 2002 and 2003 to attend and address meetings of the Sub-group on the ICC of the Council of the European Union's Legal Commission. It also took part in conferences organized by the European Commission in Brussels (January 2002) and Naples (September 2003) in favour of programmes and activities to encourage ratification and implementation of the Rome Statute, and gave accounts of its own activities to promote the ICC.

Cooperation with the [Commonwealth Secretariat](#) was intensified. The Advisory Service helped to organize and took part in the Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on International Humanitarian Law jointly organized by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Red Cross, which took place in London in February 2003. The Conference, at which 48 Commonwealth countries were represented by their government and/or National Society, was the first of its kind. The main emphasis was placed on exchanging views and ideas on practical action in addressing common issues, including international humanitarian law implementation. A report "A Guide to Action" summarizing the Conference's main comments and recommendations was produced and widely distributed.

In addition, regular contact was maintained and exchanges of views increased with several non-governmental organizations, such as the International [Coalition for the International Criminal Court \(CICC\)](#), in order to coordinate efforts to promote ratification of the Rome Statute. An informal meeting with selected NGOs active in this field was held by the Advisory Service in Geneva in December 2003 to share information on their respective strategies, plans of action and activities in support of the ICC.

Cooperation and dialogue was also further developed in 2002 and 2003 between the ICRC's Advisory Service and partner organizations of the Coalition for an International Criminal Court in the South-East and East Asian region. In October 2000, the ICRC's Advisory Service helped to organize a regional Expert Meeting on the International Criminal Court in Manila, held under the auspices of the Philippines non-governmental organization, the Centre for Restorative Justice in Asia. The ICRC also took part in the follow-up meeting held in Phnom Penh in October 2002. In addition, ICRC representatives participated as speakers and facilitators in several regional conferences and workshops organized by the CICC and the Bangkok-based Forum Asia (Bangkok, December 2002; Kuala Lumpur, December 2003; Manila, February, 2004).

Closer direct contact was also developed with the [International Criminal Court](#) and ICC representatives were invited to speak as experts at conferences in various parts of the world on the repression of war crimes by national and international jurisdictions.

The Advisory Service furthermore encouraged government representatives to share their experience and know-how on the implementation of international humanitarian law and the ICC Statute by inviting them to speak as experts at national or regional technical workshops in various parts of the world organized by the Advisory Service on the penal repression of war crimes.

Many States have set up National Committees or similar bodies on international humanitarian law. These bodies, which include representatives of the various ministries concerned, as well as national bodies and specialists appointed for that purpose, advise and assist governments in promoting and implementing IHL. They are an effective means of promoting respect for this law in the States where they have been set up. Their establishment has therefore always been encouraged by the Advisory Service, which also assists them in their work.

During this period, the number of National Committees on International Humanitarian Law has continued to increase. On 31 December 2003, there were a total of 66 such bodies throughout all regions of the world. New National Committees were set up or re-established in Brazil, the Comoros, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, the Republic of Korea and Sudan.

Meetings and tools

A Meeting of Representatives of National Committees on International Humanitarian Law took place in Geneva on 25-27 March 2002. Since 1996, when the Advisory Service organized a first Meeting of Experts on Committees or Other Bodies for the National Implementation of International Humanitarian Law, there have been numerous developments: the number of Committees has doubled worldwide; they have engaged in a wide range of activities; they have established closer links with the ICRC; regional meetings have been held; and IHL has continued to evolve. For all these reasons, it seemed important to bring together the representatives of existing National Committees from all over the world, in particular to assess their impact and their roles in the progress made by States in terms of national implementation.

On the agenda of the meeting held in 2002 there were, for instance, discussions on current activities and future prospects for National Committees, on ways to improve the effectiveness of the Committees' work and on the setting up of a system to exchange information on national implementation. A report entitled *International Humanitarian Law at the National Level: Impact and Role of National Committees* was then published by the Advisory Service. It includes a document compiled after the meeting, which provides practical advice to facilitate the work of National Committees on international humanitarian law and is based on the knowledge and experience gained by the ICRC in this field over the years. This document supplements the *Guiding principles concerning the status and methods of operation of national bodies for the implementation of international humanitarian law* drawn up by the Advisory Service after the 1996 Meeting of Experts.

Regional meetings also continued to be organized by or in cooperation with the ICRC in many countries, including Belarus, Guatemala, Kenya, Morocco and Slovenia. Such meetings are very helpful in dealing at the working level with substantive issues related to national implementation of international humanitarian law, as well as questions concerning the functioning of the Committees themselves. As a forum in which National Committee members can more easily and directly share their experience and compare approaches adopted, they facilitate the search for practical solutions, allow for broader discussions on topics that are particularly relevant for each region and enable potential regional dynamics to be turned to account.

List of existing bodies

STATE	DATE	STATE	DATE
Argentina	1994	Kenya	2001
Australia	1981	Korea (Republic of)	2002
Austria	1988	Kyrgyzstan	2003
Belarus	1997	Lesotho	2001
Belgium	1987	Lithuania	2001
Benin	1998	Malawi	2001
Bolivia	1992	Mali	1998
Brazil	2003	Mauritius	2001
Canada	1998	Moldova	1996
Cape Verde	2001	Morocco	2003
Chile	1994	Namibia	1995
Colombia	2000	New Zealand	1980
Comoros	2003	Nicaragua	1999
Côte d'Ivoire	1996	Norway	1989
Croatia	2000	Panama	1997
Denmark	1982	Paraguay	1995
Dominican Republic	1995	Peru	2001
Egypt	2000	Philippines	2000
El Salvador	1997	Serbia and Montenegro	1970
Finland	1993	Seychelles	2001
France	1947	Slovakia	2001
Gambia	1999	Slovenia	1999
Georgia	1998	Sri Lanka	2000
Germany	1973	Sudan	2003
Greece	2000	Sweden	1991
Guatemala	1999	Tajikistan	1999
Hungary	2000	Togo	1997
Indonesia	1980	Trinidad and Tobago	2001
Iran	1999	Ukraine	2000
Italy	1988	United Kingdom	1999
Japan	1999	Uruguay	1992
Jordan	1999	Yemen	1999
Kazakhstan	2003	Zimbabwe	1993

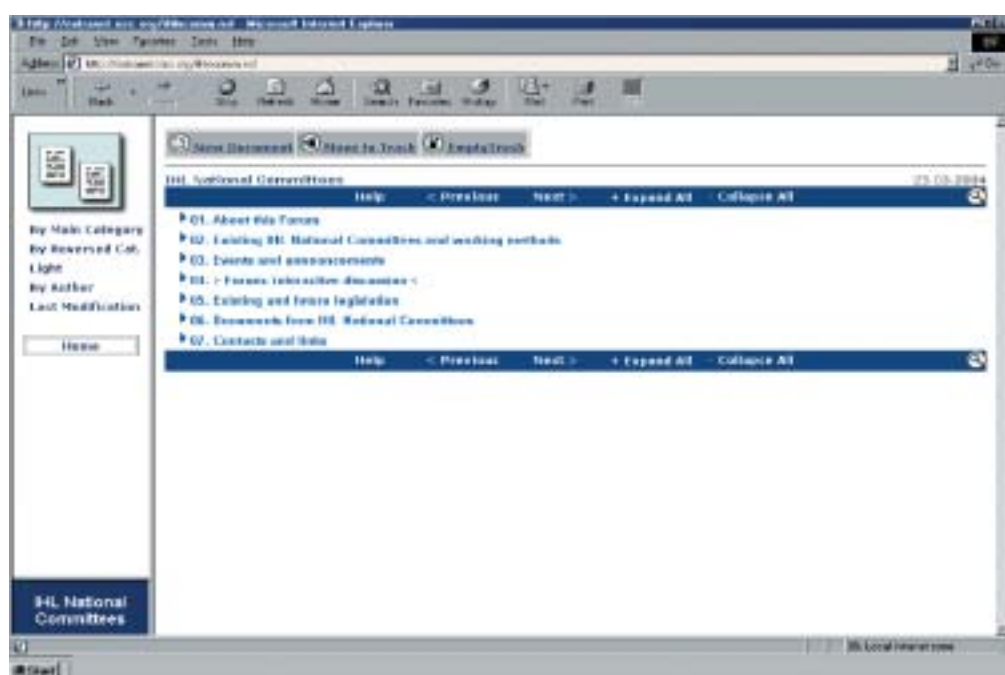
In order to assist the National Committees on International Humanitarian Law in their work, the ICRC Advisory Service on IHL launched an electronic forum in 2003 allowing for interactive discussion and providing access to relevant documentation.

Objectives

The objectives of the forum are to facilitate the exchange of information and experience between National Committees on international humanitarian law, to strengthen contacts between them and thereby to encourage States to take national IHL implementation measures.

Content

Overview of the forum



- information on existing IHL National Committees: name, contact details, legal basis, membership and mandate, plus ICRC documents on their creation and operation;
- events and announcements: information on meetings, new Committees, etc.;
- interactive discussion: on substantive national IHL implementation issues and on the functioning of the Committees;
- information on existing and future legislation: information posted by the Committees on laws or regulations themselves, or on the process of their adoption;
- documents from IHL National Committees: plans of action, annual reports, work sheets, etc.;
- addresses and links: contact details, links to IHL National Committee websites and to other websites on national implementation of IHL.

This forum was created with the intention of offering National Committees a communication tool that would allow for maximum ease and spontaneity in the exchange of information. No specific format is required for questions and reactions, which should mainly originate from National Committees themselves. Documents are welcome and may be attached to illustrate any aspect included. The ICRC's role is limited to hosting the forum, structuring discussions and giving input whenever necessary.



(Example of question)

To ensure the widest exchange possible, the use of English is encouraged in the forum. However, users may also conduct discussions in French and Spanish and may post documents in any language.

Access

This electronic forum is located on an ICRC Extranet (http://extranet.icrc.org/droit_international). A link to it is also available from the page on National Committees on IHL of the ICRC website (www.icrc.org). To access the forum, users need a user name and a password. To obtain them, please contact the ICRC Advisory Service on IHL at the address on the cover page of this publication. Access is given to all members of National Committees on International Humanitarian Law and to ICRC legal advisers. The ICRC may also grant access to other relevant specialists and organizations.

The following publications on national implementation of IHL can be ordered from the ICRC Production, Marketing and Distribution Division by e-mail at shop.gva@icrc.org or at the following address:

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English, French, Spanish

Price: free of charge

ICRC

ref.0814 (2000-2001), ref. 0775 (1999), ref.0737 (1998), ref. 0718 (1997), ref.0686 (1996)

International Humanitarian Law at the National Level: Impact and Role of National Committees – Report of a Meeting of Representatives of National Committees on International Humanitarian Law, prepared by Isabelle Küntziger and Baptiste Rolle

English, French, Spanish

Price: Sfr. 30.–

ICRC

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Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949

1954 Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its Protocols

1972 Convention on the Prohibition of Bacteriological Weapons and on their Destruction

1976 Convention on the Prohibition of Military or any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques

1980 United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

1993 Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction

1997 Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction

National committees for the implementation of international humanitarian law

The protection of the red cross/crescent emblem

Penal repression: Punishing war crimes

Missing persons and their Families: Recommendations for drafting national legislation

Means of personal identification

Punishing war crimes: International criminal tribunals

Statute of the International Criminal Court

The International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission

Legal protection of children in armed conflict

Civil defence in international humanitarian law

New Weapons

The obligation to disseminate international humanitarian law

Legal advisers in armed forces

The exchange of information on national measures to implement international humanitarian law

ICRC database on national measures implementing international humanitarian law

Electronic forum for National Committees on International Humanitarian Law

Information kits

Information kit on national enforcement of international humanitarian law

Obligations in terms of penal repression

Method of incorporating punishment into criminal law

Universal jurisdiction over war crimes

Time-barring

Command responsibility and failure to act

Criminal procedure

Cooperation with extradition and judicial assistance in criminal matters

Information kit on the development of national legislation to implement the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines

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1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

Model laws

National legislation on the use and protection of the emblem of the red cross or red crescent

Model Geneva Conventions Act for common law States to implement the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocol of 1977

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Guidelines

Guiding principles concerning the statutes and methods of operation of national bodies for the implementation of international humanitarian law

Practical advice to facilitate the work of National Committees on international humanitarian law

Practical advice for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict

Other documents

Issues raised with regard to the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court by national constitutional courts and Councils of State

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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance.

It directs and coordinates the international relief activities conducted by the Movement in situations of conflict. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles.

Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

